



# THE FORTEAN SOCIETY

## MAGAZINE

No. 4

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1941

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### INDEXED

To the brilliant, hair-raising text of Charles Fort there has now been added a complete INDEX which covers every topic, date, proper name, publication and geographical location mentioned in the entire work. For instance—you can find

every reference to any year, any month, any type of phenomena—such as *red-rain*, *fish-fall* or *quakes*, etc., etc., etc.—to any individual Scientist, book, institution, or place. This index alone is worth the price of admission! At one time it was planned to publish the index separately and at *more* than the cost of the index *plus* the complete, uncensored text of all four volumes. At four dollars for the four books *and* the index, *The Books of Charles Fort* is a tremendous bargain.

There is an introduction by Tiffany Thayer, the Secretary of the Fortean Society, which contains reminiscences of Charles Fort, biographical facts, and a clear exposition of the Society's aims.

To demonstrate the type of mentality to which this book appeals we list a few Forteans:

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J. David Stern  
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Aaron Sussman  
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Alexander Woollcott  
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#### THE FORTEAN SOCIETY

Box 192, Grand Central Annex

New York City

# Babes in Arms

by TIFFANY THAYER

Here is the *complete* text of the manuscript as written, a portion of which appeared in KEN, a magazine which set out to tell the truth and changed its mind before the first issue appeared. The portion reprinted from KEN is reprinted with permission.

The article was written in 1937 and the edited version appeared in KEN, May 5th, 1938.

AT THE RIPE old age of 35, this child of Democracy and Capitalism and Civilization, taught to read and write—and by the sheerest chance endowed with the ability to think, looks up from his crib with a purposeful gleam in his baby-blue eyes and pushes his bottle of warm milk aside. "Mother!" says he—in a voice she has not heard before—"I want steak and potatoes. I'm tired of being treated like a child. Get me a pair of pants!"

I don't know how many other infants feel the same way about it. Not many of my generation realize that they are being treated like children. Most of them feel quite grown up with their pretty toys—a music box that plays, between commercials, and a rattle that carries them from gasoline station to gasoline station, and picture books—tabloid size—and a magic lantern which shows beautiful clowns jumping around and making noises, and a kite that soars faster than the wind!—except when something goes wrong with it. Most of my generation has become so fond of its playthings that it has not been aware of its mental age, carefully maintained at adolescence.

For a long time, my own swaddling clothes tangled around my ankles so that I had great difficulty in learning to walk. Who wants to walk anyway with a nice shiny rattle to ride in? For a long time, the music box played so loud and so constantly that I had the devil's own time learning to talk—and now that I have learned, the music box is still playing so that my words are not likely to be heard. And all the dazzling picture books, filled with the most amazing wonders and marvels and advances of science and invention and progress and civilization, kept me dizzy for years. Oh, those picture books! At eleven I was going to be an airplane pilot.

But, if my mother, Democracy, and my father—either Capitalism or Civilization or both—wished to keep me in sweet and naive innocence through my entire life, it was a mistake to teach me to read; because I can't read without thinking. I even think when I listen to the radio, which is quite a feat in itself.

When I read about a "lie-detector" being invented I am very curious and when the picture of that electrical appliance shows how it is strapped on the wrists—I remember that "electrodes" are thus applied to the ankles of condemned men in the electric chair—a dangerous toy against which I have been warned. When I read that this apparatus is the invention of a Catholic priest, I remember that in another day Catholic priests invented other means of divining falsehood, notably an ordeal by fire and the famous water test—not to mention the rack and the wheel.

When I read in one issue of the *New York World-Telegram* that this lie-detector has been applied to a Negro named Major Green, accused of murder, and that it has "failed" to prove him guilty—and then read a "correction" of that statement in another issue of the paper which goes on to say that the test has "helped corroborate the suspicion of the police"—I wonder who has advised the *World-Telegram* to change its story. (January 28, 1937.) When the Negro goes to the electric chair I begin to worry.

Nor are my childish fears abated when a New Jersey constable, convicted of extortion, voluntarily submits to this test in an effort to gain a new trial. Even when the judge rules that the results of the test will "not be conclusive" I continue to tremble—because a single act of legislation in this land where laws are stamped out like bottle-tops can admit these mechanical findings as evidence and thus place in the hands of any ruling power the means to a terroristic Inquisition. The test of the constable showed that his protestations of innocence were lies. He was sentenced to from 1 to 3 years in the penitentiary.

The newspaper description of the test reveals its absurdity, but absurdity is no guarantee of protection from its horrors. The victim of this new toy is attached to it so that his reactions are recorded by a red ink line which wavers at a moderate rate while innocuous questions are asked but jumps immoderately when a query pertinent to guilt or innocence is put to him. Obviously, any change in heart, blood, nerves or brain which might cause the line

to jump could as well be attributed to alarm at recognition of the danger in that question as to the reaction of a guilty conscience. Father Summers, the inventor, says that these tests have agreed perfectly with 49 previous cases, and I, for one, suspect that they will agree with every other "case" in which the instrument is used. Babe that I am, I ask in all simplicity how anyone is ever going to be proved innocent by the machine.

To be sure, the danger is not imminent, and I am less afraid of lie-detectors than I am of a "free" press which changes its mind so easily or gets its facts wrong so often.

When a Greek freighter loaded with scrap-iron leaves the United States, even though the ship's papers give its destination as Rotterdam, this baby does not believe the metal is going to be made into wooden shoes. When such a ship sinks off Cape Hatteras, I am reminded of labor trouble among seamen all around our shores for a number of years and I recall that some laborers are opposed to sending scrap-iron abroad—even to Holland. I am reminded that sailors have hair on their chests and fat girls tattooed on their arms and that some of them are quite capable of scuttling a ship.

When I read in the papers that one of the seamen had to threaten the radio operator with a knife to force him to despatch an S O S because the captain would not give the order, I begin to detect an odor. And my pink nostrils, so accustomed to eau de cologne (imported—duty paid) and Mennen's talc (no advertisement—for once), are more offended than ever when I read that the radio operator—as chance would have it—went down with the ship, and that the man who said he held the knife has been misquoted. The knife was in his hand "innocently" and not mutinously at all.

Reading that retraction prepares me for another. Although apparently incensed at the time because the National Broadcasting Company would not let him talk about syphilis over W J Z, General Hugh S. Johnson takes it all back. He isn't angry any more and that was not censorship of the air because N B C put Dr. Morris Fishbein on instead of General Johnson and the doctor talked about syphilis. Then this child recalls that General Johnson sometimes speaks disconcerting truths but that Dr. Morris Fishbein is the chief alibi artist for the American Medical Association. This child recalls that as editor of the *American Medical Journal*, Dr. Fishbein has just finished one of the toughest jobs of his entire career in saving the composite face of his colleagues in the sulphanilamide scandal at the expense of the reputation of a single drug house who manufactured a product said to have taken between 73 and 93 lives. With all the laws we have in this country, this fledgeling notes there was none on the books equal to the task of prosecuting the drug house in open court. It's all done with Mirrors! With Mirrors and Bulletins

and Timeses and Tribunes—the almost “free” picture books the children of my generation have been given to keep us amused and quiet.

Dr. Fishbein spoke about syphilis but you can bet he did not quote John A. Kingsbury, former director of the Milbank Memorial Fund, who—on February 3—accused “medical politicians and merchants in medicine who control the destinies of organized medicine in the United States” of direct responsibility for the slowness of progress in combatting that disease.

No retraction of that statement has been printed, to my knowledge, but it may be that Dr. Kingsbury was crazed by drinking sea water. That was what the picture books said about one sailor who bit the captain's nose in the scrap-iron ship sinking. The biter “disappeared in the water (with the radio operator) after attacking the captain and members of the crew clinging to a cargo boom.” Do any of the other children wonder with me if that man was not fighting for his life? Sailors are not psychiatrists nor are they judges but they found it expedient to declare that fellow mad.

That recalls a similar verdict rendered out of hand from London on Armistice Day. A “madman” cried: “All this is hypocrisy — you're deliberately preparing for war!” as King George posed silently at the cenotaph. When I read that I scanned every syllable of the story to learn why the man was called “mad” and it seems that his lunacy is alleged on the strength of a similar outburst once before—that time in Parliament. What other inspired truth he uttered on the previous occasion is not in any of the local A B C books or daily Mother Gooses. It is simply said the man had been confined in an asylum for speaking out of turn. This baby expects nothing less if he should by some miracle achieve publication for this little word exercise.

Mother Democracy! Father Civilization! I want a steak and a pair of pants! You can have your pretty kite that has smashed the brains out of thousands of gullible youngsters like me in the sacred name of Progress. I don't like your secret reports after such accidents. I don't like the publicity you give safety devices for planes and radio beams that do not work. I don't believe the propaganda you dole out as news of scientific advancement. I am old enough to know that what you call “progress” is just another way for someone to make money—no matter how many of us they kill doing it. I am old enough to know that war is not the only means of getting killed on the wings of deliberately instilled prejudices. There's “advancement” too. I know that. It's been in all the papers. Men and women who give their lives for aviation are martyr-heroes to a Forward Step in Man's Climb Upward. Any Forward Step is worth many lives—but not many dollars, I guess, because—in my babyish way—I should think “television” would be a Forward Step. Is that arrested development in me? Because that is a new toy we are not permitted to have. Unless I cannot read or smell or see,

“television” has been a mechanically practical reality for a number of years, but it is being purposely withheld because somebody is afraid to release it, because too many millions of dollars are at stake, in automobiles, in gasoline, in theatres and other real estate, in Hollywood, in newspapers and in advertising, advertising, advertising.

Do you think H. H. Beverage, president of the Institute of Radio Engineers and Manufacturers Association fools me when he says that we can't have television because receiving sets would cost too much? He doesn't. And neither does all that hokum they release to the newspapers as “news” every week. I know that not even employees of R C A and A T and T can get through the sacred portals of the laboratories without a blindfold and a pass signed by someone near the Throne. What is really holding it up? Are the owners of all those patents afraid of it too? Afraid of the economic consequences? Do you think it might be against “Public Policy” to release television?

I am old enough to be told about Public Policy now, too. I know about Santa Claus and the Easter Rabbit and sex. What is Public Policy? Who administers it and by what right? What law covers that? What man or what body of men determines what Public Policy shall be?

Federal Judge Charles G. Briggles in Chicago ruled that widows should not be given their husbands' insurance money if they murdered their husbands. He made that decree “as a matter of public policy”. Is it the right of Federal Judges, then, to establish Public Policy? Is that in the Constitution?

Speaking of Judges and the Constitution recalls that Mr. Charles Evans Hughes “relinquished” an honorary membership in the American Press Society, November 16. Was that a measure of Public Policy? Do you suppose there is going to be a war between the press and the radio to decide which is to control the mental age of all us children?—which is to dish out the pap?—which is to get the bulk of the gravy? Maybe the Chief Justice was cleaning the skirt of his robes so that when the issue comes before him he can vote against President Roosevelt's fireside music box without being accused of bias.

I'm pretty young to be worrying about things like this, and—of course—I don't know anything about the inside workings of government; how could I? All the spelling and grammar lessons I have had come out of newspapers or the radio. All I know is what they are permitted to tell me. But they don't tell it all, Mother. They only tell enough to keep me a good little soldier in time of war and a customer for airplane tickets in time of peace.

When the Federal Communications Commission in Washington told or asked or ordered or suggested—as only a Federal Commission can — that The National Wireless Power and Light Corporation of Greenwich, Conn., postpone its “demonstration of the feasibility of the use of transmission of electric power and light by wireless” (March 9)—was that in the

interests of Public Policy? Who is the Federal Communications Commission? By what right do they interfere with such a “demonstration”? It would raise merry hell with the Public Utilities as they are now organized if that came out, wouldn't it, Mother? Do you suppose the Public Policy of the Federal Communications Commission is holding off wireless transmission of power and light until the Right People can protect their investments?

Just a babe in arms, but very tired of the nipple and the sugar-teat, I want to know these things because I'm afraid for my life and afraid for my personal, physical liberty. I don't mean Liberty—I mean that I don't want to be put in an asylum or a jail. I don't want to be sterilized or electrocuted. Democracy, Capitalism and / or Civilization have made me infantile and have prevented me from growing beyond a mental age which is in accordance with current Public Policy. How do I know they won't decide to kill off such morons as they have made of me?

Professor Earnest A. Hooton of Harvard has been delivering speeches for months on the subject of “biological purge” and he has written a book called “Apes, Men and Morons” which emphasizes the right of educators and scientists to determine Public Policy.

Out in Beloit, Kansas, near Topeka, they sterilize girls for talking back to the authorities of the State Industrial School, by allegation of the girls, of course, you wouldn't expect the authorities to tell on themselves!

In Emmett County, Iowa, according to charges by the C. I. O., youths of 16 and 20 years had to consent to sterilization before “relief” was given their “poverty-stricken” parents.

The papers are full of the demand for more psychiatry in public institutions and for the finger-printing of all psychotics. Deputy Chief Inspector of Police John J. O'Connell, New York City, advocates finger-printing every mothers' son of us! Where are my pants!?

I'm going to get out of this if I can. A lot of college professors, financed in part by the Good Will Fund of the late Edward A. Filene, have organized what they call the Institute for Propaganda Analysis. On its face, that is a ray of hope for us kids. The false whiskers are going to be torn off all the bogey-men and the darkness of the Black Chamber and all other official closets is going to be dispelled in the light of reason—until one goes into it a bit—as this one did. Then it becomes clear that the Institute for Propaganda Analysis is merely a new form of propaganda, and, which is worse, a form of it in which the professors themselves have implicit faith. Their panaceas are “education and science”—the same two terrors which sterilize the unwilling and confine plain-spoken Englishmen to Bedlams; the same two horrors which have given us the lie-detector, the airplane, and the fireside music box which will become a magic lantern and a picture book as well as just as soon as Public Policy will permit it.

May, 1941

THE FORTEAN

5

All the 35 years of my childhood I have fought shy of Communism because its basic principle of equality is so palpably false, but I had rather be a Communist than a perennial, drooling infant. I want meat; the meat of fact unadorned. I want to know what is going on in this world they say is mine, even if I am powerless to stop it.

When I read that Ferdinand Louis Kerrin, a Laborite from Britain, has given the Columbia Broadcasting System 48 hours in which to consider his speech and that it is not returned to him until

10 minutes before he goes on the air and that then it has had its guts removed—I don't believe the retraction. I know—as certainly as a mortal may know anything—that Mr. Kerrin's remarks have been censored no matter what CBS says later.

But—I am old enough to know that these stories are printed in newspapers, natural enemy of radio, and that the first blast is intended to impress the jury, the retraction is only a bow of mock courtesy to the bench.

On the other hand, I have outgrown the puerility which takes solace from such

copy-book maxims as this

#### BUSINESS UPTREND HERE LAST MONTH

"The biggest gains last month over September were recorded in building construction, newspaper advertising and department store sales."

Mother! Where would the newspapers be without advertising—and department store sales?

"The same place radio would be, my son. Now—hush-a-bye back to sleep, you lamb!"

# THE NOTES OF CHARLES FORT

The notes below continue the story of "Princess Caraboo" from the point where they broke off in No. 3 of the Fortean Society Magazine.

## 1817 Box A (Resumed)

April 3

(13) In Bristol Daily Post, no mention of Caraboo. Under "Deaths" no record of her under any of her names. Post for Dec. 1864.

(14) (This is a continuation of 12 above. T. T.) in Bristol since 1849 when "after much reluctance she gave him her signature as 'Mary Baker'." He too had been unable to find the exact date of her death. p. 418—a correspondent asks for the sake of completing the history of this character, the date of the death—entries in the parish register / I don't know what demonstrates that she (was) persuaded to write a name.

(15) Not in Bristol Daily Post Jan. 1865 nor Dec. 1864.

(16) Caraboo's Confession / Fox sisters confession / Some psychic researches (reverse) refuse to accept that, (one or two words? T. T.) but that it was made worth their while to confess / lecture tour.

(17) Caraboo lodged in Bristol and Mrs. Neale—Mrs. W. confronted the girl and girl confessed to Mrs. W., begging her not to tell. / Not say Mrs. W. but Mrs. Samuel Worrall of Knole Park near Bristol (reverse) That she born at With-

eridge, Devonshire, in 1791, and left home at age of 16 to work in a farm house and then in various services in London / Mrs. W. sent her to America.

(18) In this pamphlet said not true she was smuggled aboard but was shipped openly as Mary Burgess; one of the names of Mary Wilcock's who had married Burgess.

(19) Specimens of writing examined by oriental scholars without identification and sent to Oxford where said no known language / said that everyone who examined it "very properly, and without a moment's hesitation" pronounced it humbug. As to stories about her she was taken in by a "Mrs. W." of Bristol. Ran away from Mrs. W. and people of Bath took her in. Mrs. W. followed her and took the girl back to Bristol. Here said that a Mrs. Neale recognized her as having been an English girl who had (go to 17 above.)

(20) The story is that she was taken into the home of Mrs. Worrall, and because of circumstances unstated ran away from Mrs. W. and found hospitality in Bath; was followed to Bath by Mrs. W. who took her back to Knowles, where almost immediately a Mrs. Neale came and identified her as an English girl; where upon she broke down

(21) and confessed that she was Mary Wil ?; that Mrs. W. went to Devonshire and from her story of Mary the Wilcocks recognized their daughter Mary but that neither of the parents was taken to the Noles (Fort's spelling. T. T.) to make sure of the identification and that almost immediately after returning from Devonshire, Mrs. W. shipped the girl away to America, not smuggling her away as she was accused of doing and under a name unrecognized by Caraboo's friends in Bath.

(22) Gloucester Journal, June 9, 1817 / Letter from Dr. C. H. Wilkinson describes her hands as unaccustomed to labor. "Very cautious in respect to gentlemen. Never allowed them to take hold of her hand." (reverse Went to house top to adore the sun. Fencing with great dexterity, sword in one hand and dagger in other. On back of head a scar of an operation, extremely regular incisions he thought was Oriental cutting, but unlike any operation by an European surgeon. / (Gl. Jour.) Dr. Wilkinson of Bath / Sailed June 28 / told in Journal, July 4.

(23) In the pamphlet "Caraboo" it is said the interpreter was an imposter. (So cut out picked up Malay) This pamphlet in (??T.T.) saw she an imposter said she was partic-

ularly expert in fencing (reverse) "complexion very trilling sallow" p. 20 / Carried with her a cord with knots like the Chinese abacus p. 20 (Italics) / That one or two characters of her writing resembled Chinese.

(24) In Niles Weekly Register. Aug. 30, arrival of the impostor "Poll" Baker is recorded in Philadelphia. / Sept. 20 under the title "Shameful" said that a concert had been arranged in Philadelphia for the benefit of Mary Baker, or Miss Caraboo the infamous impostor. Oct 18 — Editor writes that he is sincerely mortified to learn that at the concert this questionable character appeared and wrote in an unknown language upon a sheet of paper and spoke in the unknown language.

(25) B O / Caraboo in Bath recognized by someone who notified a believer in her. Whereupon culminates her reception in Bath.

(26) B O / Caraboo ran away from Mrs. W. on June 6.

(27) Said sent to America in charge of some Moravian Missionaries.

(28) (A newspaper clipping from the Observer, probably London, although the city is not named. T.T.) June 10, 1923, (a feature column headed) The World of Letters. (This day's column is devoted to) Psalmanazar and Caraboo / By "Penguin" / (About midway down the column after reviewing a book about Psalmanazar, the "Penguin" comes to the lady, thus): Psalmanazar was, I contend, without a peer. The purpose of these notes is to introduce to those readers not already acquainted with her—an overwhelming majority, I imagine—a lady, who were it not for the accident of time, well deserved to have become Mrs. George Psalmanazar. Her story is to be found in a book bearing the title "Caraboo: a Narrative of a Singular Imposition. Practiced upon the Benevolence of a Lady Residing in the Vicinity of the City of Bristol, by a Young Woman of the Name of Mary Wilcocks, *alias* Baker, *alias* Bakerstendht, *alias* Caraboo, Princess of Javasu." It tells how an illiterate girl, unaided by either beauty or education, "with no apparent object but an ambition to excel in deceit, so conducted herself

both in the language she made use of, and her general demeanor, as to have induced hundreds to believe that she was no less a personage than an unfortunate, unprotected, and wandering Princess from a distant Eastern island, cast upon the shores of Britain by cruel and relentless Pirates." Although constantly surrounded by persons of superior talent and education, as well as by those in her own rank of life, who were always on the watch to mark any inconsistency or to catch any occurrence that would lead to detection, this cobbler's daughter never once betrayed herself by look or word.

Cariboo (I follow the spelling of the original in each case. T. T.) made her first appearance on Thursday evening, April 3, 1817, when Mr. Samuel Worrall, of Knole Park, Gloucestershire, was informed by the overseer of the parish "that a young Female had entered a cottage in the village, and had made signs that it was her wish to sleep under its root; but not speaking a language which its inhabitants or the overseer understood, the officer thought it right to refer to Mr. Worrall, a magistrate for the county, for his advice." Interest in this singular apparition soon spread. Two days afterwards the girl, who persisted in pretending a complete ignorance of English, was examined before the Mayor of Bristol at the Council House, "where no discovery could be made of her country or language, or whence she came, or whither she was going." At last a gentleman "who had made several voyages to the East Indies, who was conversant with every creek and harbour in those seas, and well acquainted with the costumes of China," elicited some facts from the interesting stranger:—

That her names was Caraboo; that she was the daughter of a person of rank, of Chinese origin, by a Maudin, *alias* a Malay woman, who was killed in a war between the Boogoos (*Cannibals*) and the Maudins (*Malays*). That whilst walking in her garden at Javasu, attended by three sammens (*women*) she was seized by the people of a pirate prow. bound hand and foot, and thus carried off. . . . That being near some part of the coast of England, in conse-

quence of the ill-usage she experienced, she tormented and carried into execution the resolution to jump overboard, and she swam ashore. . . . Her rather's country she called Congee (*China*)—her own island from which she was taken she called Javasu, and that of her mother the Maudins (*Malay*). She described her mother's teeth as being blackened, her face and arms painted, and that she wore a jewel at her nose, with a gold chain from it to the left temple; which decorations her mother wished to have adopted for her, but her father would not consent.

Within a short period Cariboo (sic) became the social attraction of Bristol. The philosophers, the cognoscenti, the blue-stockings ladies gave parties in her honour. The Earl of C—k came from Bath for the sole purpose of conversing with her. The Marquis of S—y wrote to request the same indulgence, but she was supposed to have left Bristol. She was in fact visited by persons of all descriptions—natives and foreigners, linguists, painters, physiognomists, craniologists, and gypsies; all were anxious to converse with this female Psalmanazar." An accident disclosed her true origin and history. But those whom she had duped bore her no ill-will. A passage to America was taken for her, and the last we hear of her is, when on board the "Robert and Ann," Captain Robertson, she set sail for Philadelphia, doubtless to begin another career.

(29) (A newspaper clipping.) "Western Daily Press" Bristol, 25th August 1926. AN ALMONDSBURY HOAX / The Case of Princess "Caraboo" / Was She Buried at Bristol? (It is likely that this story is the direct result of Fort's request of this editor for information. T.T.)

A review appeared in these columns a short time back of a reprint of the late Rev. S. Baring Gould's "Cornish Characters." The house of John Lane has now issued. . . . "Devonshire Characters" and "Strange Events" . . . One chapter of particular interest to Bristol especially at the present moment when one reads so much recounting of notorious hoaxes, is that devoted to the woman who posed as "Caraboo, a Japanese Princess." The Caraboo hoax is worthy to

rank with any of these which have lately been retold at length. We have referred to the story more than once in these columns, but, perhaps a brief recapitulation of the facts would not be out of place now, especially as we find ourselves in the light of recent investigations, able to add something to the "Caraboo" story as given by Mr. Baring Gould. He refers to her as sailing for America after her imposture was exposed and infers that nothing was heard of her afterwards. As a matter of fact, she returned to Bristol, was known here for years, was the butt of children in the city's streets, and ultimately died here.

#### The Mysterious Stranger

It was on Thursday evening April 3, 1917 (sic!—and see above, "Japanese". T.T.). that a young woman, apparently unable to speak English, entered a cottage at Almondsbury, and by signs expressed a desire to sleep there. The good folk of the cottage utterly mystified by her strange appearance and manner, went to the overseer and the overseer went to Knole Park, then the residence of Samuel Worrall, Esq. Orders were given for the woman to be taken to Knole. The overseer returned with "a slim damsel, dressed poorly but quaintly, with a sort of turban about her head, not precisely beautiful, but with very intelligent speaking eyes."

Mr. and Mrs. Worrall had a Greek valet who knew or could recognize most languages spoken in the Levant. His aid was sought, but he could make nothing of the girls' jargon. Mrs. Worrall had her conveyed to the village inn, and sent her own maid and footman to attend her. When shown to a bedroom "she prepared to lie down upon the floor; whereupon the landlady put her own little girl into bed, so as to explain its purport to her quest. The stranger then undressed and went to bed."

Next day the clergyman of the parish was sent for. He took books of travel and illustrated geographies with him, so that the young woman might give some clue as to whence she came. "She manifested pleasure at the pictures of China and the Chinese."

She was taken to Knole. She pointed to herself and

uttered the word "Caraboo" and so Caraboo, they all deduced, was her name. She declined all animal food, took nothing to drink but water, showing marked disgust at beer, cyder and meat.

#### The Talk of the Countryside

Caraboo became the talk of the countryside. She was conveyed to Bristol and examined before the mayor and magistrates. Then she was taken to St. Peter's Hospital for vagrants in Bristol. "The friendless situation of the foreign lady" became more and more the topic of public gossip in Bristol. She was visited by several gentlemen who took foreigners with them to hear her language. She remained a mystery.

Mrs. Worrall, deeply touched, as we read, had her removed to the office of Mr. Worrall in Bristol, and then, at last (this is the strangest chapter of the hoax) a Portuguese of the name of Manuel Eynesso, who happened to be in Bristol, had an interview and actually professed to be able to interpret what she said.

At any rate, Eynesso explained that her language was not a pure dialect, but a mixture of several tongues spoken in Sumatra. Mixture it most assuredly was!

Caraboo was taken back to Knole, at Almondsbury, and there for ten weeks she kept up the imposture, and was visited by all sorts of travelled people. Never was she heard to speak a syllable that resembled a European tongue; never did she vary her choice of food. Twice she was missing from Knole, and twice taken back, once being found posing as the Princess of Javas, "in the drawing-room of a lady of Bath, where one fair lady was kneeling at her feet and another imploring the honour of a kiss."

#### Identified

Arrangements were actually made by a Dr. Wilkinson to go to London and obtain funds from the Foreign Office for the relief of the Princess, and her restoration to her native land, but at last the wide circulation of the story led to the imposter's uncloaking. She was denounced by a Bristol woman, with who (sic) she had lodged, and was eventually identified as a Mary Baker, born of humble parentage, her father a cobbler at Wither-

edge, Devon, in 1791. She had received no education, and in early girlhood was wild and wayward. She wandered about the country and had many adventures before finally she landed at Almondsbury and began her hoax as an Oriental princess.

Certainly this illiterate young woman must have possessed uncommon personality and ingenuity to have been able to impose upon the number of educated people she did over such a length of time, and it is noteworthy that "she never purloined anything or showed other sign of wantonness. Variety and the love of hoaxing people were her prevailing passion; there was nothing worse behind."

Mr. Baring Gould relates how she was sent across to America, and he infers, as we have mentioned, that that is the last known of Caraboo. Here he was undoubtedly in error. The facts are that "Caraboo" returned from America after seven years and exhibited herself in London and in Bath. "Admittance," says contemporary records, "was one shilling; but" (the writer naively adds) "it does not appear that any great numbers went to see her." It is reported, too, that her inveterate spirit for roving took her to the Continent, and that finally she came back to Bristol and retired "into comparatively humble life, marrying and following the profession of importer of leeches, which she also applied when requested by customers." She died about the close of 1864, leaving an only daughter. In December, 1849, says another writer in 1865, she was living under Pyle Hill, Bedminster, and went by the name of Mary Baker. The writer adds that "she displayed extreme annoyance when children called out 'Caraboo' after her in the streets."

Probably she was buried in Bristol. The Arno Vale authorities, in reply to a query we recently addressed to them, reported that a Mary Baker, of 7, Rosemary Street, was buried at Arno Vale Cemetery on January 31st, 1865, and it is possible, of course (though by no means certain), that this is the Mary Baker whose hoax at quiet, staid Almondsbury, forty years before, had been something more than a seven days' wonder. P.E.B.

(29) (A newspaper clipping.)

'Western Daily Press' Bristol, 27th August 1926 — *Local Notes*: Some interesting sidelights on the romantic history of "Princess" Caraboo, referred to in Wednesday's issue, are provided by Mr. Charles Eyles, managing clerk to Messrs James Sinnott and Son, solicitors to the "Princess's" daughter, Miss Mary Ann Baker, who died in February, 1900, at the age of 71 years. Miss Baker is described as a lady-like woman although eccentric in her dress. She clothed herself almost in rags and appeared rarely to wash her face. She lived at 2, Queen Street, Bedminster, and at the time of her death as the neighbours had not seen her for some time the police broke into the house and found her lying dead. An inquest was held at the Bedminster Police Station, and it was revealed at this inquiry that she was the daughter of Mrs. Mary Baker, who had been known as "Princess" Caraboo.

#### A Seller of Leeches

Miss Baker was buried at Arno's Vale and as she was apparently without friends or relatives Mr. Eyles was the only person who attended the funeral. She died intestate and a communication was received from the Treasury by a Bristol solicitor to sell her property. In the meantime Mr. Eyles had discovered, however, that a relative was in existence at Ilfracombe. With a doctor he visited the house and found that some of the bedrooms had not been used for 20 or 30 years, and there was a thick coating of dust over everything. Documents and money were scattered about the house and it was found that Miss Baker had died worth about £600 or £800. She had made a living by selling leeches as her father and mother had done before her.

#### Place of Burial

Miss Baker's father and the "Princess's" husband, appears to have been a doctor, and amongst papers found in the house were letters signed "R. Baker" and dated 1840 and 1841, relating to the purchase of large number of leeches. There was also the scrap of paper (reproduced in another column) possibly in the mother's handwriting, and a memorial card stating that Mrs. Baker (the "Princess") died on December 25, and was buried at Hebron Chapel on January 3, 1865. (Aside: I cannot refrain from drawing the reader's attention to the fact that the newspaper is not clear here whether or not there was anything on the "memorial card" to indicate that "Mrs. Baker," leech importer, was also the "Princess" Caraboo. The parenthesis appears to be editor's elucidation according to his belief. T.T.) It was in looking through the papers in the house that Mr. Eyles was able to trace the relatives at Ilfracombe to whom the proceeds of the estate passed. At the sale Mr. Eyles purchased, as souvenirs, a bead bracelet which had probably belonged to the mother, a small ivory salt spoon and a glass cup in the base of which is inserted a George III. sixpence. The romantic story of the "princess's" hoax aroused more than local interest and her career was the subject of an illustrated article in the 'Strand Magazine' in April, 1895. An examination of the burial registers at Hebron Chapel, Bedminster, shows that a Mary Baker, of Princess Street, Bedminster, aged 74 years, was interred there on January 3, 1865.

(30) B O / Caraboo's Daughter / Western Daily Press, Feb. 13, 1900 / That on Feb. 7, John Smith, neighbor of Mary Jane Baker, aged about 55, smelled burning, and in B's yard saw old rags and a chair burning but was assured by

Baker that it was all right. She not seen again. On Feb. 11th, police informed she not seen, sent P. C. Drake and another constable who broke in and found her on top landing, dead. There were extensive burns on left side of body. According to post mortem, death due to internal diseases, possibly accelerated by burns. John Smith, Queen Street, Coronation Road / next door to Baker's which was no. 2, Queen Street.

Apr. 3 Caraboo / 613.K.20 (K)  
3 Evening, at Almondsbury near Bristol — Caraboo / Biographical tracts 613.K.20 / Young woman walked into a cottage making signs that she wished to sleep there—declined animal food, showing much disgust. Examined by magistrate who said that her language and manners were such as never seen in his experience (reverse) Imposture—a Portuguese named Manuel Eynesso pretended he could speak her language and told a story purporting to be interpretation of her own that she had been stolen from an East Indian Island—and some ones else acquainted with the East Indies "in the warmth of his anxiety to discover her history" told that her name was Caraboo of Chinese-Malay origin and kidnapped by pirates from her home in Java on a ship, from which she had escaped to the coast of England, having exchanged her clothes, worked in gold, for common clothes, — had wandered 6 weeks / The story is that she was identified as Mary Baker and that she confessed—and told some incidents in her life. Her parents were visited and corroborated the stories of incidents—no record they ever went to Bristol to identify her. She wished to go to America and her passage was paid—extraordinarily—to Philadelphia. / George Psalmanazar / See Baring Gould.

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